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In The Drawings

Applicants propose amending Figure 6 by adding the label "Prior Art". A replacement sheet incorporating the change is enclosed.

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REMARKS

Reconsideration and reexamination are requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. New claims 7-9 are added. Claims 1-9 are pending.

I. Telephone interview

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the telephone interview conducted on January 11, 2006 with Applicant's representative, James Larson. In the interview, amendments to claim 1 were discussed as were the Lorch and Soderstrom references. No final agreement was reached concerning allowability of claim 1.

II. Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants request consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on October 13, 2005, along with return of the initialed Form 1449 with the next official communication. Since the Information Disclosure Statement was filed before the mailing date of the office action, no additional fee is believed to be due.

III. Amendments

Figure 6 of the drawings has been amended to include the legend "Prior Art". This amendment is supported by page 5, line 3.

The amendments to claim 1 are supported by the original disclosure, for example Figures 1-5.

New claim 7 is supported by the original disclosure, for example page 6, lines 10-15.

New claim 8 is a combination of previous claims 1 and 3, and new claim 9 is supported by claim 4.

No new matter has been added by these amendments.

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IV. Claim rejections

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Lorch (US 4,488,691).

In addition, claims 1, 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Soderstrom et al. (US 6,729,693)

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Lorch does not disclose a lap belt portion having a length sufficient to extend across the thighs of the passenger for restraining the thighs of the passengers and wherein in use the lap belt portion is disposed above the thighs of the passenger from one end of the lap belt to an opposite end thereof.

The rejection refers to elements 26a and 26b of Lorch as a lap belt portion. However, the elements 26a and 26b only extend across one thigh of the pilot. As a result, Lorch provides two separate crotch strap pairs 26a, 26b, one pair for each thigh. Lorch does not disclose that the crotch straps 26a and 26b have a length sufficient to extend across both thighs of the pilot.

During the above-referenced interview, it was suggested by the Examiner that the two crotch strap pairs together with the portion of the saddle strap 22 connecting the crotch strap pairs constitute a lap belt portion. However, the two crotch strap pairs and the interconnecting portion of the saddle strap in Lorch are not disposed above the thighs of the passenger from one end of the crotch strap pairs to an opposite end of the crotch strap pairs. In Lorch, the lower crotch straps 26a extend between and below the thighs of the pilot to where they are attached to the saddle strap 22, and the interconnecting portion of the saddle strap 22 is below the thighs of the pilot. Therefore, the crotch strap pairs and interconnection portion of the saddle strap are not a lap belt portion as claimed.

Lorch does not teach each and every feature recited in claim 1, and claim 1 is not anticipated by Lorch. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Soderstrom does not disclose a shoulder belt portion extending generally diagonally across the upper half of the body of the passenger, a lap belt portion having a length sufficient to extend across the thighs of the passenger, and a thigh belt portion that has a length sufficient to extend across a seat cushion of the associated seat so as to be

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disposed under the thighs of the passenger between the thighs and an upper surface of the seat cushion in use.

The rejection identifies element 20 in Soderstrom as a shoulder belt portion. However, the element 20 does not extend generally diagonally across the upper half of the body of the passenger.

The rejection also identifies the lap belt portion as the portion of lap belt 16 that is directly connected to belt anchor 32. However, there is no disclosure that the portion of the lap belt 16 directly connected to the belt anchor 32 has a length sufficient to extend across the thighs of the passenger.

Further, the rejection identifies the thigh belt portion as the portion of the lap belt 16 that is directly connected to retractor 24. However, the portion of the lap belt 16 that is directly connected to retractor 24 is not disclosed as having a length sufficient to extend across the seat cushion.

In addition, the portion of the lap belt 16 that is directly connected to retractor 24 is not disposed under the thighs of the passenger between the thighs and an upper surface of the seat cushion in use. Rather, the portion of the lap belt 16 that is directly connected to retractor 24 is disposed over a single thigh, not under both thighs, and is not disposed between the thighs and the upper surface of the seat cushion.

Soderstrom does not teach each and every feature recited in claim 1, and claim 1 is not anticipated by Soderstrom. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

V. New claims 8-9

The indicated allowability of claims 3 and 4 is noted with appreciation. New claim 8 is a combination of claims 1 and 3, and claim 9 is similar to claim 4. Claims 8 and 9 should be allowable

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VI. Conclusion

In view of the above, early issuance of a notice of allowance is solicited. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Curtis B. Hamre, Reg. 29,165, at (612) 455-3802.



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Respectfully submitted,

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